



BOKO HARAM AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY: THE RAMIFICATIONS OF TARGETED SANCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria, a country with a prolonged history of instability, is the one on which Boko Haram waged its acts of terrorism. The implosion of the terrorist group Boko Haram has been one of the biggest threats to Africa's most populated country in terms of intensity, organization, and spread. Judging from the sophisticated nature of weapons and high-level intelligence used in the various acts of violence waged by this terrorist group, it becomes clear that it is operated through the motivation, material, and ideological aid obtained from parent groups.

The acts of terror inflicted by the deadly group including displacement, abductions, and death of innocent civilians have terrorized Nigeria and its entire society, making their activities a subject of obsessive discussion among the international community at large. The quick harsh response with which the global community of nations tried to tackle this problem is indicative of the severity of the problem. In the face of the terrorist group's violence, following the unrest not only Nigeria and its surrounding countries, but also the world at large, the United Nations (UN), along with the European Union (EU), and the United States of America (USA), have imposed harsh targeted sanctions also known as smart sanctions on the group, most importantly including travel bans on its associates and asset freezing of its membership.

This paper interrogates the Nigerian state and the international community's response in relation to analyzing the impact of sanctions placed on terrorist groups and their effectiveness (or the lack of it). It concludes that unless the international community concretely tackles and strengthen its resolve to ensure the strict application of punitive measures, the effectiveness of sanctions would likely remain an illusion.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Targeted or Smart sanction, Terrorism, kidnapping, international community, ramifications

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, terrorism constitutes one of the biggest challenges facing Nigeria in particular and the world in general, posing a major threat to collective global security and economy. The huge economic returns of sponsoring terrorist activities and undertakings, particularly considering the potential benefit enjoyed by dominant powers in the global order by supplying arms to various parties of conflict across the world, it is clear that such acts of instability may not be lessening any time soon.

Generally, terrorism could be said to be a form of violence against defenseless civilians to achieve political and/ or religious objective(s). The terrorists' ultimate goal is to create an atmosphere of fear and anxiety among the people where they carry out terror attacks (Neira, Gross, and Marshall 2006). In the event of uprisings characterized by disturbances, terrorist groups ensure the creation of an atmosphere where people prioritize long-term concerns about their safety (ibid).

The above description within the context of terrorism is not far from the experience of Nigeria and greater Africa. All these retrogressive happenings have to a larger extent been sustained by the existence of weak government structures, leaving Africa defenseless and vulnerable in the fight against terrorism and other violent extremist

organizations operating in sub-Saharan Africa such as the Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in the Sahara (AQIM), the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, and Boko Haram in Nigeria (Kaufman 2012).

In the league of terrorist groupings, the Jama'atuAhlis- Sunnah li-Da' awatiWal-Jihad, commonly referred to as Boko Haram is widely considered one of the deadliest terrorist groups in Africa, and definitely in Nigerian. This violent extremist group continues to launch assaults on communities. They have engineered assassinations, explosions, and onslaughts on the entire Nigerian social structure. Their attacks in northern Nigeria have claimed the lives of thousands of people while causing serious and irrevocable damage to property; in northeastern Nigeria, particularly localities like Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, an estimated number of about two million people have reportedly been displaced (United States Department of State Publication Bureau of Counterterrorism 2017).

These attacks have had devastating humanitarian effects beyond the borders of Nigeria, deep into neighbouring countries like Cameroon and Chad. The combined effect of all these has contributed towards shaking the stability and peace of both Western and Central Africa. Furthermore, owing to the high rate of terrorist activities against Nigeria, major investors have abandoned Nigeria for other countries with a more peaceful and stable environment, and the Nigerian economy is left gasping for breath leading to a decline in Foreign Direct Investments

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(FDI). The negative international image that the implosion of Boko-Haram activities has projected on Nigeria has negatively affected the country's economy, business operations, and general performance (Onyebuchi 2018).

The activities of Boko Haram peaked to nauseating levels with the abduction of 200 female students in government schools in Chibok Town, Borno State, Nigeria for which the group publicly claimed responsibility. This open act of intransigence provoked international outrage which gathered global momentum, subsequently leading to the famous campaign 'Bring Back Our Girls'. In response to the situation, the United Nations, under Chapter V of the UN Charter and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which mandates the body to respond to any threat or breach of international peace and security or any act(s) of aggression, stepped in to still the churning waters. Noteworthy is the fact that the triggering or application of sanctions came in to effect at the peak of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq which saw the strict application of such sanctions. Drawing inspiration from the success there, the UN introduced targeted sanctions, otherwise known as smart sanctions intended to whip leaders, offender political elites, and segments of society deemed responsible for reprehensible behaviour into line, while limiting the impact of collateral damage on the general population.

The aftermath of the much-reported kidnapping of the Chibok girls resulted in the UN Security Council exercising its responsibility by imposing targeted sanctions against Boko Haram. Strictly applying the provisions of related conventions, Boko Haram was included in the list of Al-Qaeda organizations subject to arms embargos, assets freezes, and travel bans (BBC 2014). In evaluating the impact of sanctions, the UN Security Council's Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee emphasized the Al-Qaida sanctions regime as an important

tool to combat terrorist activities. As part of the measures to handle and contain rebel groups, the body urged all member states to actively participate by nominating for listing additional individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities which will be subject to the sanction measures (TSC 2013). Subsequently, it prompted the US government to impose sanctions against the terrorist organization Boko Haram, its kingpin, Mus'ab al-Barnawi, and other global affiliate networks. As such, the US Department added Boko Haram, later renamed as ISIS-West Africa, to the list of groups under sanctions for global terrorism (Adeyemo 2018).

In what appeared to be rigid action against the sect, the initiative by the US compelled the EU to also impose sanctions on Nigeria's Boko Haram as a terrorist group linked to Al Qaeda, several weeks after the kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls. Ever since, the United Nations has increasingly used this type of sanctions to address a wide range of threats to international peace and security. These comprise the fight against terrorism, prevention of conflict, consolidation of peace agreements, protection of the civilian population, support for democracy, and improvement of resource management (TSC 2013).

Against this backdrop, the present research seeks to answer the question: What is the practical impact of sanctions imposed on Boko Haram? Why is radical Boko Haram, and its resultant terrorism, thriving in Africa in spite of the fact that the overwhelming majority of sanctions in the current global order are imposed on them? In seeking an answer to this question, the paper progresses as follows: Introduction, the history of targeted or smart sanctions, purposes of targeted or smart sanctions, an overview of Boko Haram, targeted or smart sanctions imposed on Boko Haram by the International community, the effectiveness of targeted /smart sanctions in containing Boko Haram activities, and some

concluding thoughts and observations.

Targeted or Smart Sanctions

History

In the mid-90s, the world was shaken by humanitarian crises. In the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's attack of Kuwait in that decade, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) imposed far reaching sanctions on Iraq. This so-called non-violent alternative to a military solution resulted in a humanitarian disaster that was clearly reflected in the deaths, illnesses, and resentment inflicted by the sanctions. The search of alternative measures to avoid a repeat of these circumstances led to a series of projects and workshops carried out to seek harmless and new methods of containing humanitarian crises short of imposing economic sanctions, which leaders of the UN unanimously agreed as unwittingly ending up hurting innocent civilians and as such should be avoided (Kanji 2016).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, conferences were held in Interlaken, Berlin/ Bonn, and Stockholm to discuss financial holds, travel restrictions, and arms embargoes as possible measures to be taken in this regard. Additionally, efforts were made to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of sanctions. These meetings gave birth to the concept of 'smart or targeted' sanctions, emphasizing the need to adjust sanctions in such a way as to reach individuals and entities directly responsible for reprehensible behaviour, while protecting the general population from any damage. Various reports on how to improve the design and implementation of targeted sanctions were also published but perhaps most importantly, the exchange of ideas made during this process brought about a real change in UN sanctions practices, whereby the member states officially accepted the principle of 'smart' sanctions (LSE 2015).

Purposes of Targeted or Smart sanctions

The key purposes of targeted or smart sanctions can be divided into three (3) main categories: Coercion, Constraint, and Signaling. Coercion mainly forces governments or actors to change or discontinue their behaviour in order to meet certain demands of the Security Council. While Constraint means imposing a burden on the target to keep it from engaging in a prohibited activity, Signal sanctions are designed to clearly identify countries that deviate from international norms and standards (TSC 2013).

Types of Targeted or Smart Sanctions

In general, targeted or smart sanctions can be classified into Six (6) different types. They include Individual/ entity sanctions, Diplomatic sanctions, Arms embargo or proliferation, commodity sanctions, transportation sanctions, and financial sector sanctions.

Individual/entity sanctions (most often asset freezes and travel bans) are applied to individuals and corporate entities (companies or political parties). Diplomatic sanctions are limitations placed on a government's diplomatic activity, and they include measures such as restricting the international travel of recognized personnel and a general suspension of intergovernmental interaction. Arms embargoes or proliferation are placed on goods in order to limit the impact of combat forces. While commodity sanctions restrict trade of certain products in the target country or region, they are often placed on valuable natural resources such as diamonds or wood. Transportation sanctions refer to the ban on international transit by carriers (marine and aerial) from the targeted state. Finally, financial sector sanctions imply such measures as bans on investments and restrictions on banking services, as well as oil embargoes where applicable (TSC 2013).

Effectiveness

Even though sanctions are used by politicians

and practitioners to penalize wrongdoers, complaints about the constricted success rate of sanctions imply that they may be far from being effective. Analysts consider the success rate of sanctions to be 33 percent or lower (Lopez 2007). So far, the success rate of targeted sanctions in the 20 cases where they were imposed outside of comprehensive embargoes is comparatively low since only five out of the 20 can be judged at least partly successful, a success rate of about 25 percent.

The United States, ever since it supported UN Security Council Resolution 661 to expel Iraq from Kuwait in August 1990, has backed the imposition of sanctions on many nations. Particularly in the aftermath of the Al Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001, the US spearheaded the employment and engagement of technical smart sanctions with the approval of the UN Security Council as an approach to fight what many claim to be the most serious present day threat to the US-dominated global order and security apparatus.

A notable achievement in this area has been the prohibition of 'blood diamonds' and accompanying financial networks in seven African wars. In addition, seizing financial assets and fake passports to lock down the networks of the Al Qaeda in the initial six months after the terrorist attacks of September, 2001, as well as the success of sanctions in Libya and Egypt stand testimony to the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. However, as a universal preposition, targeted measures are more likely to be successful when unpretentious goals are sought-after (Hufbauer, Schott, and Oegg 2001).

An Overview of Boko Haram

The West African state of Nigeria, now considered the largest economy in Africa, has suffered prolonged attacks in the North-East of the country by the armed Islamist movement

of Boko Haram. Members of this group prefer to be known by their Arabic name - Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Ldda'awati Wal-Jihad - which means 'people engaged or committed to spreading the teachings and jihad of the prophet'. The group was reportedly formed in the city of Maiduguri, where its inhabitants call members of this group by the name 'Boko Haram', a combination of the Hausa word 'Boko', which literally means 'western education' and 'Arabic', and 'Haram' which means 'sin' or that which is 'forbidden'. Boko Haram's birth and growth may largely be attributed to a combination of factors including poor governance, corruption, poor infrastructure, extreme poverty, and the rapid expansion of a fundamentalist Wahhabi theological system that opposes the generally liberal strand of Islam that has long been practiced in traditional northern Nigeria.

Boko Haram has used a mixture of methods ranging from overt violence to more subtle means such as the use of social media, in asserting its power and pushing hard to ensure the spread of Sharia law. Even though the group is currently being pursued by a combined team of international forces drawn from Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger – allegedly under the backing of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France – this has not discouraged them from carrying out acts of suicide bombing, mass abductions, and massacres against the local people of northeastern Nigeria and neighbouring countries. In the last phase of the tenure of office of former Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan, the group became a huge lump in the throat of the administration. It Nigerian forces were constrained in matching, containing, and launching reprisal attacks against the group. The effect of the onslaughts from the group was so overwhelming that it caused the national armed forces of Nigeria to retreat in the face of persistent terror and killing. The compound effect of these, coupled with the internal and external pressure on the Nigerian

government to address the issue swiftly, led to terse diplomatic relations between the government of Nigeria and the United States of America. This was obvious in the Jonathan-instructed directive to the US military coach to leave the shores of Nigeria (Onuoha 2012).

International Affiliation

The years of aggression carried out by the group confirms that the group is not merely a domestic terrorist organization, but more of a jihadist organization with international connections and affiliations to similar organizations overseas. Reports confirm Boko Haram's main objective of becoming central in the larger worldwide web of international terrorist groups including the Islamic Maghreb's Al Qaeda and its affiliate in Mali and the entire Sahel, the Somali-based Al-Shabaab, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) with whom it has close connections (Agbibo 2014).

Ideologically, the Boko Haram sect runs parallel to other similar movements like the Al Qaeda. According to a Boko Haram member who was captured:

Our [Boko Haram] relationship with Al Qaeda is very strong. In fact, our leader Shekau and his team were in Mecca for the lesser Hajj to consolidate that relationship. We carried out the attack on the UN building when he and the Al Qaeda leadership were about to go into a meeting there, in order to strengthen our negotiation position (Onuoha 2012).

In this light, it may be fair to declare that Boko Haram is an extension of Al-Qaeda, to whom the former extends respect and loyalty. Therefore, it came as no surprise that in 2015 Boko Haram pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) and rebranded itself as the Islamic State of the West Province (ISWAP). The group's instant adoption of the IS's black jihadist banner

and de facto anthem, 'My Umma, Dawn has Arrived' upon its release to the internet was a gesture that signaled a somewhat institutional companionship (Antwi-Boateng 2017). In addition to the Al-Qaeda and IS, the Algerian Salafist Group has also been a principle source of intelligence and technical assistance to the group for the making and using IEDs and dirty bombs meant for combat.

Finances

Like many other terrorist and insurgent groups, the Boko Haram uses illegal channels to finance its activities. While some of these illegal media have been transnational and cross-border in scope, others are located within the jurisdiction of Nigeria. Boko Haram is known to be active in illicit trafficking markets, extortion and protection rackets, bank robberies, looting, and kidnapping for ransom, as means of financing its greater operations (Weber 2014).

Though Boko Haram's regional and international funding sources obviously remain obscure, it is reported that the group received its initial money from Osama bin Laden in 2002 through a disciple named Mohammed Ali, whom bin Laden sent to Africa with \$ 3 million to fund like-minded military organizations. The group is also said to have received money from the Algerian Al-Qaeda branch in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Somali group al-Shabab (ibid).

There is also a handful of non-militant groups accused of contributing monetarily to Boko Haram, including the British Al-Muntada Trust Fund and the Saudi Arabian Islamic World Society. Monetary policy practices anchored in Muslim culture, such as donations to charities and informal money transfer centers, have made it difficult to isolate terrorist financial links (ibid).

Targeted or Smart Sanctions Imposed on Boko Haram by the International Community

The uproar around the world in response to the abduction of 200 Chiko schoolgirls by Boko Haram mounted pressure on the international community to act immediately, which resulted in the imposition of sanctions on Boko Haram. At the Paris Summit on Security in Nigeria held in 2014, Nigeria's neighbours as well as the UK, US, and EU all agreed at the UN to impose targeted sanctions against Boko Haram. Further, Boko Haram's aggression led to the UN, EU, and the US declaring them a terrorist group linked to Al-Qaeda. The sanctions came into effect after no objections were raised by the 15-member Security Council included an arms embargo, financial asset freezing, and a travel ban. Under the terms of the sanctions, it constituted an offense for any individual or entity to provide financial or material support to Boko Haram, including the supply of arms or recruits. Furthermore, the EU imposed sanctions on Boko Haram as an al-Qaeda linked terrorist group. EU sanctions on Boko Haram terrorist group included an arms embargo, asset freezing, ban on financial operations, and travel ban. Along with Syria's jihadist Al-Nusra Front, this move subjected Boko Haram, as well as people or entities supporting either of the two groups financially or materially, to sanctions including an arms embargo, asset freezing, and travel ban (Benar 2014). Additionally, Shekau Mohammed Abubakar, the official leader of Boko Haram, and Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan, a splinter group of Boko Haram, are now subject to restrictive measures (Lester 2014).

In June 2012, the United States State Department classified Boko Haram's top commanders as specially designated global terrorists under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224. In June 2013, the State Department added Abubakar Shekau, Boko

Haram's official leader, to its Rewards for Justice Programme and offered up to \$7 million for information leading to his capture. In November 2013, the State Department designated Boko Haram and Ansaru, a splinter faction, as Foreign Terrorist Organizations under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, and as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224 (The White House 2014).

What is the practical impact of sanctions imposed on Boko Haram?

When dealing with any terrorist organization including Boko Haram, one of the first steps to be taken is to identify and freeze their assets as well as those of their sympathizers. Sanctions imposed by the UN, EU, US, and other international actors are in response to what they consider to be reprehensible behaviour including the violation of human rights and democratic principles through such means as bombing, killings, abductions, and/or potential security threats.

The United Nations initial sanctions against Boko Haram, following the reported abductions of the school girls, were seen by many as a step in the right direction. One notable voice that supported this move was that of the US ambassador to the UN Samantha Powell who held that the sanctions against Boko Haram were an "important step" in support of efforts to "defeat and hold its murderous leadership accountable" (Nichols 2014).

However, it is quite difficult to determine the practical impact of sanctions on Boko Haram terrorist undertakings. "The leaders of Boko Haram and their fellows do not travel on passports, but travel on the ground in commandeered cars," Omoyele Sowore of Nigeria's Citizen journalism website Sahara Reporters once told the BBC website (2014). This means of travel gets them to their planned destinations without their identities

being exposed, and this makes it difficult for the security officers to track their activities.

In addition to the above, they also hold no formal property that may clearly be traced back to them. In contrast to Al-Qaeda, whose top tier was made up of multimillionaires whose assets could be traced and frozen, Boko Haram generates its funds primarily through bank robberies and ransom money, which makes it extremely challenging to track their assets and wealth. Therefore, targeted sanctions seem to be having only a marginal impact on Boko Haram. Reuter's journalists Phil Stewart and Lesley Wroughton (2014) interviewed US officials to understand why the US had been struggling to tackle Boko Haram's funding flows. US officials admitted that Boko Haram's financial operations make it difficult to track and identify funding flows. According to them, financial sanctions and counter-financing measures introduced after 9/11 are insufficient to affect Boko Haram's funding.

The United States has intensified its cooperation with Nigeria to collect information on Boko Haram. According to an official interviewed by Reuters, Boko Haram uses a courier system to move cash across the porous borders of Nigeria and neighboring African countries. The US Treasury Department said in a statement to Reuters that the US has proof that Boko Haram has received financial support from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), a tributary of the jihadist group established by Osama bin Laden, even though it stated that its support was limited. Officials with in-depth knowledge of Boko Haram Finance say that any contact with Al Qaeda or its affiliates is irrelevant to Boko Haram's overall funding. A US official who asked not to be named said, "Any financial support AQIM may still be offering Boko Haram will become pale and weak compared to the resources obtained from criminal activities" (FATF 2016). Though various assessments give differing figures,

the US financial transfer estimate for AQIM is as low as hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In contrast, Boko Haram is estimated to earn millions of dollars through kidnappings and ransoms. However, it should be noted that Boko Haram's years of radicalism flourishes not only because of these local sources of revenue, but also because there is an on-going illegal arms trade in the West African sub-region which has not been efficiently addressed by the region's national governments and other interest groups. Although targeted sanctions have been imposed, the effectiveness of reducing their illegal arms transactions has not been adequate. In addition, much of Boko Haram's military equipment is not purchased, but stolen from the Nigerian army. In February, 2014, for example, dozens of its fighters broke in to a remote military outpost in the Gwoza Hills of northeastern Borno State and plundered 200 mortar bombs, 50 rocket-propelled grenades, and hundreds of rounds of ammunition. These attacks left the group fully armed for months to come. During dozens of attacks last year, Nigerian soldiers were thrown aside by militants driving trucks, motorcycles, and sometimes even stolen armoured vehicles, firing rocket-propelled grenades (GIABA 2013).

West Africa has for many years been the center of illegal trade in small arms and light weapons (SALWs) in Africa. The "Merchant of Death", also known as international brokers, provide SALW in the form of AK 47 weapons, rocket launchers, self-loading weapons, assault rifles, locally made weapons, mortars, short, long and double barrels, revolvers, hand grenades, pumping operations, Beretta weapons, and Kalashnikov in the entire region. In the case of easily penetrable Nigeria's borders, Boko Haram and other armed groups in the north have had the option to get or traffic huge loads of arms and ammunition from some West and Central African nations such as Cameroon, Niger, and Mali toward

the upper east where they have proceeded with the eight-year Jihadist war against the Nigerian state (GIABA 2013). Boko Haram weapons smugglers have utilized different strategies to carry weapons into the nation. There are reports that Boko Haram individuals frequently hide arms in sacks, trucks, and at the back of camels and donkeys to keep from being captured by Nigerian security forces (GIABA 2013; Onuoha 2013; FATF 2016). Several border towns on the northeastern side often function as trafficking places for weapons and illegal goods. Being familiar with these towns, Boko Haram individuals have had the option to move arms and ammunition through more than 250 border routes connecting the Damaturu/ Maiduguri pivot to Cameroon, Chad, and Niger (Musa 2013).

A study of Boko Haram's weapon smuggling strategy also displays that some grain traders in the northeastern part of the country have designed a way to hide weapons and ammunitions in vacant tank trucks, vehicle engines, and bags of grain. In most cases, it will not be detected by border security agencies. While it might be possible to discover and capture arms supplied in little vehicles, it is normally difficult to recognize arms mounted in large quantities in trucks, trailers, heavy trucks, lorries, and older model pick-up vans (Musa 2013). The GIABA (2013) announced that approximately 2.5 million weapons and light weapons are in circulation in Nigeria. This is closely followed by Cote d'Ivoire (458,677), Senegal (263,714), and Mali (174,752). These regional estimates may not closely reflect the actual number of weapons circulating in the region, as the secret nature of the illicit trade in SALW always makes it difficult for governments to arrive at accurate statistics on the number of weapons in circulation.

Prior to identifying Boko Haram as a terrorist organization, the US State Department

referred to Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi, and Abubakar Adam Kamar as SDGT in June 2012. The terms FTO and SDGT allow the confiscation of any assets that Boko Haram may own in US financial institutions, and criminalize financial transactions with Boko Haram members. As highlighted in a report of the Congressional research service (2016), Boko Haram is marked as an FTO which has no impact on its financing. There are laws in place to ensure that if Boko Haram or its sympathizers openly operate in financial institutions, their funds will be frozen and rendered unusable. However, never has a criminal complaint been filed in US courts about individuals supporting Boko Haram. Therefore, freezing Boko Haram's financial assets appears to be the least effective sanction against its financial lifelines.

Hence it can be concluded that the targeted sanctions imposed by the international community against Boko Haram have not been effective. Even though sanctions are designed precisely to punish the relevant terrorist group without affecting the economy, it is also meant to prevent any significant humanitarian consequences from emerging as a result of the continued function of terrorist groups. What is evident today is that, despite the various types of targeted sanctions imposed on Boko Haram, they still continue to commit the deadliest of atrocities against innocent civilians.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Boko Haram is considered one of the most dangerous armed groups in Africa, whose atrocities constitute a major problem facing Nigeria and its neighbouring countries at present. Boko Haram's activities have wrought devastation and brought forth many socio-economic consequences that have effectively discredited the international reputation of Nigeria. At the initial outbreak of the crisis, though the international community ignored Boko Haram – perhaps because of its unclear

structure and relatively unknown status – the kidnapping of the Chibok school girls shot them to heights of notoriety. This marked a shift in the focus of the international community to examine the underlying motivations of the group, after which the UN was compelled to impose various types of targeted sanctions on this violent extremist group. It also encouraged the EU and the US to impose diverse types of sanctions against the group and individuals who, through their association and/ or support of the group, have caused atrocious crimes against humanity.

Despite all these sanctions imposed on Boko Haram, it is actually difficult to recognize the extent to which these sanctions have had any meaningful impact on the militant group's activities. Boko Haram has formally not organized as a group like Al-Qaeda whose assets can be identified and accordingly be subjected to sanctions. Furthermore, given that Boko Haram militants mostly travel by road without a passport, monitoring their activities has become especially challenging.

In view of the factors highlighted thus far, it may be recommended that the Nigerian state implements strict policies that will enhance its border security intensively, thereby reducing their penetrability. This could be carried out by positioning more security agents at the various borders of the country such as the Nigeria-Cameroon and the Nigeria-Chad borders to check the illegal influx and smuggling of weapons and arms. This measure if strictly carried out would go a long way to prevent the inflow of all sorts of weapons which could eventually end up in the possession of the Boko Haram and its affiliated groups.

Furthermore, considerable efforts must also be made by the Nigerian government to work with the United Nations office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to not only ensure that the provisions of arms treaties are domesticated, but also that movements in the country are closely monitored and controlled. Additionally,

the Nigerian government must ensure that the financiers of terrorism in the country are brought before the law and the wealth derived from such illegal trade is confiscated. This can be undertaken with the aid of major organizations such as the Financial Action Task Force, the global anti-money laundering and terrorist financing organization (FATF), and the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA).

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